



## Helping young people have a voice on health and social care

The health and care issues affecting children and young people in Somerset have been the focus of recent Healthwatch Somerset work.

Staff from Healthwatch have been busy around the county – speaking to Somerset’s Youth Parliament to explain the role of the organisation and visiting a CAMHS group meeting to understand young people’s experiences of using mental health services.

Also, Healthwatch Somerset’s first young volunteer (pictured) has joined the team. Tadhg said: “I am really interested in what Healthwatch does and I understand the vital impact it has on public services. I want the opportunity to be able to understand all the essential background work for the various health and care services and how they can make a difference.” [Read more...](#)

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## Could you join our team?

Do you have excellent administration and organisational skills, along with the ability to relate well to people from diverse backgrounds and build positive relationships?

Then Healthwatch Somerset would like to hear from you. A vacancy for a part time Engagement Officer is being advertised this month. [Find out more...](#)

## Christmas thank you to volunteers

A Christmas lunch was just the ticket to help celebrate and say thank you to Healthwatch Somerset's dedicated volunteers.



Judith Goodchild, Chair of Healthwatch Somerset Board, said: "We wouldn't be Healthwatch Somerset without our dedicated team of volunteers who tirelessly assist us in our work. Volunteers are the backbone of Healthwatch and enable us to make a difference".

Do you want to help hear and represent Somerset residents on health and social care issues? Contact Julie Draper on 01278 264405 or [Julie.draper@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk](mailto:Julie.draper@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk) for more information on becoming a Healthwatch volunteer. There are roles that take as little time as two hours a month.



## Improving Lives Strategy

Healthwatch Somerset will be monitoring the progress of a new strategy, launched this month by Somerset's Health and Wellbeing Board.

Emily Taylor, Healthwatch Somerset Manager, explained: "The strategy sets out a vision for Somerset. It wants all organisations to work together as a partnership to make Somerset a thriving and productive county where all

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partners, private and voluntary sector, focus on improving the health and wellbeing of all our communities." [Find out more...](#)

## Out and about this month

Find out how you can share your views of local health and social care services at one of our events this month. We will be at:

- **Glastonbury** Library, Wednesday 5 December, 10am – 12noon
- **Bridgwater** Library, Monday, 10 December, 10am – 12noon
- Talking Café, **Bridgwater**, Thursday 13 December, 10am – 12.30pm
- Talking Café, **Chard**, Monday, 17 December, 10.30am – 1pm
- **Crewkerne** Library, Wednesday 19 December, 10am – 12noon

For a full list read the [events calendar](#).



## We wish you a merry Christmas!

The team at Healthwatch Somerset writes: "As this is our last ebulletin of the year we wanted to say thank you for all your support in 2018. It is safe to say that we are proud of everything we have achieved in 2018 and looking forward to building on our successful work in 2019.



"We want to take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

The Healthwatch Somerset office will be closed from 25-30 December and 1 January 2019.

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**Healthwatch Somerset** is the county's independent health and care champion.  
We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care.

Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and care services, and what could be improved.

These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations in the county, so together we can make a real difference.



The Healthwatch Somerset service is run by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at Unit 4 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.



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**01278 264405**

**Woodlands House, Woodlands Business Park, Bristol Road, Bridgwater TA16 4FJ**

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